

22 July 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller

SUBJECT: Big Systems Planning

1. The other day Bob Wattles presented to the Director the status of a study on the location of the [] He also discussed the relocation of NPIC in this context.

2. The placement of the [] in juxtaposition one day with NPIC probably is correct. The fundamental question that keeps bothering me, however, goes beyond the content of Bob's briefing and reaches to the consequences of decisions made today concerning [] processing. For instance, what are our expectations from [] and our requirements, and how do these interrelate with [] What bearing might these expectations and relationships have on the determination now of a location for [] or an NPIC A&E survey?

3. In the FY 1972 and 1973 budgets, funds are provided to NPIC for research and development on [] processing and equipment. In FY 1973 we also included over [] for support of special studies or task groups we felt are needed to prepare for the receipt and use of the products from [] and to look into the analytic implications of real time information. Recently, during [] visit to NPIC, questions were raised about the utilization of these monies in the context of all reconnaissance systems and customer needs. [Note: [] observed to me later he had hoped, by raising this question, to hear more on the analytic rationale associated with the handling of the [] data and other systems, including [] He observed that before funds could be considered formally by OMB for exploring the processing issue or for new installations, a more careful statement of rationale and plans would be needed.]

4. The need for a special center and specialized people to handle the real time imagery is not in question. The principal question which

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precedes the physical plant (the A&E for which we are proposing [] in FY 1973) concerns the postulating of the analytic processes, their relationship to the hardware design and the production methods which would be employed in using the product, including considerations of manpower mix, communications equipments, and physical space determinations.

5. Planning to date on the analytic front has been diffused. Dick Kerr has been appointed by the DDI to explore and coordinate [] related considerations within his Directorate; as far as I know, he has begun that task well. COMIREX is probing a number of the issues related to targets, other systems, resolution and the like. OSP operational aspects are coordinated with NPIC, COMIREX, and others. General Taylor, NIPE, has a number of things going which touch on aspects of this problem; e.g., his photo reconnaissance group (PRG), strategic warning indications group (SWIG), and the USIB information handling committee (IHC). [At this writing it is unclear to me how the NIPE pieces tie together to provide the needed pattern of relationships of the many big systems to the Community's analytic needs now and in the later 70's.]

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6. In his most recent Program Plan, the DDI emphasized the need for "a mechanism to investigate, initiate and oversee completion of the steps necessary to enable the Agency to utilize fully [] capabilities." To do this, the DDI has proposed the establishment of a full-time Agency [] study group consisting of representatives of the Intelligence Directorate and other affected components which would be administratively assigned to the Office of the Deputy Director for Intelligence, but as a Group with Agency-wide responsibility would report substantively to the Executive Director-Comptroller. PPB has long urged the establishment of some such focal point to concentrate on the impact of [] in context with both the Agency's analytic and collection functions and on the phasing of manpower and support related thereto. [I have attached a copy of the DDI proposal and recommend that it be taken up at the earliest opportunity with the Deputy Directors and that the proposal be implemented.]

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7. The need for coordination and preparation for [] reaches also to the Community multi-source systems which already are collecting a wide variety of data. New systems are planned for the 70's and the adequacy of current systems pending [] is a subject of serious review

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by ExCom. The analytic task of the 70's -- or perhaps it is the information processing task -- is to correlate data from all systems in such a fashion as to reduce uncertainty, provide us with a better warning system, improve our capabilities to monitor SALT agreements and crises, and support deeper analytic inquiry -- and in a real time mode. Community collection efforts and the processing and analytic tasks involved in correlating all-source information are highly interdependent; accordingly they should also be studied as a total system. The USIB represents the foremost institutional structure representing the total systems on the requirements end. Responsibilities for the variety of inputs range across the Community as do funding and budget authority, and USIB is not designed to meet these coordinative tasks at present. This point seems to be at the heart of the recent OMB report on the organization of the Community, which emphasized a Director of Central Intelligence as the manager of the Community, working from a controlled processing and analytic base.

8. How does this all tie into the decision options for an [] or an NPIC building? Planning for the location of processing plants, communication links, ADP software, etc., for all systems including [] is a vast job. It should start from the objective of reaching the most effective correlation of analytic intelligence output for the U.S. Government that is possible and at the lowest effective cost. The dimension of that objective is almost overwhelming but some aspects of the matter are directly related to decisions we want to make now -- decisions where tradeoffs of manpower and dollars will be required. For example, []

[] There are good evidences that building too large a total system is counterproductive. [The military have had numerous failures at such attempts and NSA is a good example where the principle of "economies of scale" may not be working.] There are also political and possible security problems in locating too many intelligence entities at one point. Nevertheless, in this day of "decision options" prudent planning by CIA would seem to require that while A&E studies are being programmed for an NPIC [] location, we should also have going some institutional charge to make a Community assessment of the relationship of analytic processes and people to all-source material,

transmission forms and methods, and location. Such examination might show that, however politically difficult, the NPIC processing capability should be housed nearer to the analysts in Langley rather than to perpetuate a separation. It might show that the proposed DIA new building should be nearer receipt points for real time source processing. There are no clear answers but it seems to me that if the Community is to get funds for whatever is to be done, analytic expectations and requirements will have to be spelled out more clearly so that they may have their proper influence on whatever forms and physical plans these multisystems are likely to generate for a cost-conscious economy.

9. DOD has made mistakes in planning some of its big systems. Mr. Mahon referred to these in our recent hearing, criticizing "...committing systems to production while major uncertainties of method and use remain unsolved, and authorizing engineering development and plant construction before the analytic requirements are understood or defined." We cannot afford to ignore these observations.

10. Leadership in this matter is likely to fall upon the Director. Without new authorities, I believe Mr. Helms can take the initiative to assure that the Community's planning for the absorption of all systems gets underway, and by so doing can give visibility to a far better degree to the needs, issues and costs. The place to start is not in building plants alone, but in defining the Agency and Community analytic requirements and methodologies in the light of:

b. Foreseeable technologies (improved computer programming, communications links, equipments).

c. Relationships of geographic locations of processing elements (NSA, NPIC, ELINT centers, etc.) to the analytic forces who use the data (DIA, CIA). [In this context there is a whole range of behavioral overlays which, in our language, we call "political."]

11. As stated, this obviously is a big bite; we will have to do it in pieces. The DDI proposals should receive serious consideration now.

The construction of [] is underway. The marriage of the NPIC [] [] is a logical decision point. There are many more. Our time

at this point needs to be spent on more than just exploring geographic areas for likely sites. The institutionalizing of a plan targeted from a clear conception of analytic methodology should be the driving force to ultimate decision on physical plant design and location.

12. Lastly, if you will permit a little idealism, this opportunity for leadership will set the stage in coordination and management of intelligence information for the next 20 years.

13. I urge you take steps to have the different Agency inputs being made on this subject clearly presented and systematically laid out, and that you explore with the Deputies -- particularly the DDI and DD/S&T -- a proper institutional approach to a Community effort as well as within CIA.

John M. Clarke
Director/PPB

Attachment

DDI Proposal for ☐ Study Group

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